

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-10

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E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: PINT, IT

SUBJECT: BERLINGUER SPEECH, NAPLES, MARCH 54 1978

1. PCI SECRETARY ENRICO BERLINGUER CLIMAXED A THREE-DAY NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF PCI WORKERS IN NAPLES WITH A SPEECH ON MARCH 5 CALLING UPON AN ENTHUSIASTIC CROWD OF 10,000 WORKER-MILITANTS TO ACT AS A VANGUARD FOR THE TRANSFORMATION OF ITALIAN SOCIETY TO SOCIALISM. THE SPEECH, WHICH CONCLUDED WITH LONG SUSTAINED APPLAUSE AND THE SINGING OF THE BANDIERA ROSSA AND THE INTERNATIONALE, WAS, IN SUM, SOMBER APPEAL FOR CAUTION IN THE MIDST OF ECONOMIC CRISIS AND FOR MORE DISCIPLINE AND SOLIDARITY IN WORKING CLASS RANKS. SEVERAL DELEGATES INTERVIEWED BY THE PRESS AND RAI-TV AFTER BERLINGUER'S CLOSING SPEECH STATED THEY WOULD CARRY THE SOMEWHAT CHEERLESS MESSAGE BACK TO THEIR CONSTITUENCIES.

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2. AUSTERITY AND SACRIFICE WERE RECURRING THEMES IN THE SPEECH. SACRIFICES, ACCORDING TO BERLINGUER, INCLUDE RESTRAINT BY THE WORKING CLASS IN WAGE DEMANDS AND CONSUMPTION WHICH, IF UNCHECKED, COULD BE FATAL TO THE ITALIAN ECONOMY. HE ALSO ATTACKED PARASITISM AND THE WASTE OF ECONOMIC RESOURCES AND CRITICIZED THE SLIDE IN ITALY TOWARDS A "WELFARE STATE." MORE RESOURCES, HE URGED, SHOULD BE PUT INTO INVESTMENT, RENOVATION AND ENLARGEMENT OF THE COUNTRY'S
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PRODUCTIVE APPARATUS.

3. BERLINGUER SAID THAT THE IMPETUS FOR SOCIAL CHANGE RESTED SQUARELY WITH THE WORKING CLASSES AND THAT THE PARTY MUST SEEK TO ENLARGE AND SOLIDIFY ITS WORKING CLASS BASE BY EMBRACING THE "UNEMPLOYED EMARGINATI" AND BY ATTRACTING ELEMENTS OF THE LABOR FORCE NOW ALLIED WITH THE DC. HE DID NOT REPEAT GIORGIO NAPOLITANO'S EARLIER CALL, MADE FRIDAY, FOR "WORKING CLASS HEGEMONY." HE PRO-

POSED INSTEAD A NEW CLASS OF LEADERSHIP BASED ON THE WORKING CLASSES
AND "POPULAR FORCES OF ALL INSPIRATIONS".

4. ON THE POLITICAL CRISIS, THE PCI SECRETARY CREDITED THE PARTY
WITH HAVING INITIATED A CRISIS WHICH IS LEADING TO AN "UNDENIABLE"
STEP FORWARD FOR THE ITALIAN COMMUNISTS AND A DEFEAT FOR HARD-LINE
DC DEPUTIES. COLANTONIO.

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